

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The specification is amended by the present response to delete the noted hyperlinks at pages 39 and 40. Applicants also note the hyperlinks were not an incorporation of essential material in the specification. The hyperlinks were provided as pointers to indicate further background material, and were not an indication to incorporate essential subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit deletion of the hyperlinks is proper.

Claims 19 and 21-24 are pending in this application. Claims 1-18, 20, and 25-35 are canceled by the present response without prejudice. Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claims 17, 18, 28, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 16 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as clearly anticipated by U.S. patent publication 2002/0052961 to Yoshimine et al. (herein “Yoshimine”). Claims 17 and 25-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Yoshimine in view of U.S. patent application publication 2001/0038694 to Senshu. Claims 19, 21, 22, 23, and 24 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of the allowable subject matter of claims 19 and 21-24.

The present response is submitted to place the above-identified application in condition for allowance based on the indication of allowable subject matter. More particularly, by the present response each of claims 17, 18, 28, and 32 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is canceled by the present response without prejudice. Further, claims 16, 17, 20, and 25-32 rejected over the cited art to Yoshimine, and further in view of Senshu, are also canceled by the present response without prejudice.

Moreover, each of claims 19 and 21-24 is amended by the present response to be rewritten in independent form, so that those claims now recite subject matter indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action.

Thus, by the present response only claims indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action are currently pending.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

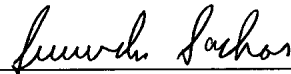
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